

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANAGU 00260 201641Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SY-02 INR-05 CIAE-00 MCT-01
USSS-00 /033 W

-----082673 210809Z /11

R 201535Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5429
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 0260

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, OVIP, PINS, NU
SUBJECT: SECURITY ASSESSMENT - ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S VISIT
TO MANAGUA

1. EMBASSY CONTINUES DAILY TO REASSESS THREAT TO USG OFFICIALS IN NICARAGUA, INCLUDING CHIEF OF MISSION. THERE ARE RECENT STATEMENTS, PASSED TO US PRIVATELY, THAT AMBASSADOR SOLAUN AND ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO WILL BE ASSASSINATION TARGETS. WE ARE ANALYZING THESE ASSERTIONS, BUT THEY ARE STILL RUMORS AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED. EVEN SO, AS OF JANUARY 19 WE BELIEVE RISK TO U.S. AMBASSADOR, EVEN IN ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC THREAT TOWARD HIM, REMAINS SUBSTANTIAL ON BASIS THAT HE IS SYMBOLIC TARGET FOR ANYONE WHO MIGHT BE DISSATISFIED WITH USG POLICIES OR ACTIONS AS THEY ARE PERCEIVED TO RELATE TO CURRENT SITUATION IN NICARAGUA, OR WHOSE INTERESTS WOULD BE SERVED BY PROJECTING IMAGE THAT GON HAS LOST CONTROL OF SITUATION.

2. WE KNOW OF NO RPT NO THREATS AGAINST ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN AND BELIEVE THAT RISK TO HIS SAFETY SHOULD BE VIEWED BASICALLY IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE. THE RISK TO HIM HERE IS PROBABLY ABOUT SAME AS, OR SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN, IT MIGHT BE IN A PLACE SUCH AS SAN SALVADOR WHERE THERE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN VIOLENT ACTS AND EMOTIONS RUN HIGH.

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3. WE EXPECT GON TO TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S SECURITY WHILE HE IS IN NICARAGUA. MOREOVER, A TEAM OF DEPARTMENT PROTECTIVE SECURITY SPECIALISTS IS NOW IN THE COUNTRY ASSISTING WITH CHIEF OF MISSION SECURITY. WE PROPOSE THAT THE TEAM REMAIN IN MANAGUA THROUGH ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S VISIT.

4. EMBASSY WILL TRANSMIT PERIODIC UPDATES OF SECURITY SITUATION AS

APPROPRIATE.

SOLAUN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANAGU00260
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780032-0572
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780141/aaaabhzd.tel
Line Count: 64
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0421c7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3741586
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECURITY ASSESSMENT - ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S VISIT TO MANAGUA
TAGS: ASEC, OVIP, PINS, NU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0421c7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014